



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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Contact: Heather Handyside  
(907) 350-4846

## **Begich Calls Findings of Report on Public Safety in Rural Alaska ‘Horrific’** ***Demands Action through Senate Committee on Indian Affairs***

Describing the findings as “horrific,” U.S. Senator Mark Begich called for the Senate Indian Affairs Committee to hold a hearing on the recently released Indian Law and Order Commission report, [A Roadmap for Making Native America Safer](#), which details the stark public safety inequalities in Alaska villages.

“Our public safety systems are woefully inadequate,” said Sen. Begich, a member of the Senate Indian Affairs Committee, in a letter to the chairwoman, Sen. Maria Cantwell (D-WA). “Alaska Native women are much more likely to be victims of sexual assault and abuse, while Alaska Native men are more likely to serve longer criminal sentences. The effect on Alaska Native youth from these trends is horrific and they are more likely to become involved in criminal activities and become victims of abuse.”



Sen. Begich calls [for a special hearing](#) on the recently released Indian Law and Order Commission report.

During yesterday’s Senate Indian Affairs Committee hearing, Sen. Begich questioned Department of Interior Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs Kevin Washburn about public safety issues in the report.

The Commission report details the cycle of violence and injustice in rural Alaska and calls for strong actions from the State of Alaska, Congress, and Alaska Native leadership. The report describes problems with public safety and justice as severe. The Commission devoted an [entire](#)

[chapter to Alaska](#), in which it states, “The public safety issues in Alaska—and the law and policy at the root of those problems—beg to be addressed.”

“The chapter on Alaska within the report is horrific and I refuse to let the report recommendations get filed away and forgotten,” Sen. Begich said. “These are the same problems I’ve been working to address in my *Safe Families, Safe Villages* bill. I am going to make sure these issues stay in the forefront of everyone’s mind because public safety is far too important and cannot be ignored.”

A copy of the letter is attached.

Video is available [here](#).

Audio is available [here](#).

[YouTube video available here.](#)